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"Thirty-One Presidential Elections"

Written Expressly for this Magazine

WHILE this article is being written the result of the election of 1908 is not known. Otherwise the record of the thirty-one elections which have taken place since the foundation of the republic is complete, and readers of this magazine will have in compact form a history for which they would have to search many volumes. It should be preserved for future reference.

At the time of the adoption of the Constitution there was a party opposed to any party in favor of the Constitution as it came from the convention. The latter prevailed; but the opposition triumphed in forcing, in the various conventions called to ratify the instrument, an agreement that ten amendments should be adopted, embodying ideas which the original convention, under the influence of Hamilton, had refused to enact. By this compromise the Constitution came into effect with the assent of all parties.

The ten amendments, embodying the more democratic ideas of the party, at first known as Anti-Federalists and headed by Jefferson, were adopted and ratified according to compact. They forbid the establishment of any state religion and provide freedom of religion, speech, the press, assembly and petition; the right to bear arms; trial by jury and other safeguards for the security of the citizen against arbitrary authority; provision against the abuse of military authority and a final clinching in the Tenth Amendment, which says that "the powers not delegated to the United States nor prohibited to the States are reserved to the States respectively or to the people."

At the first election the electors voted for George Washington unanimously. As the Constitution then absurdly proposed that the electors should vote for two candidates, the person receiving the second highest number of votes to become Vice-President, the electors scattered their second vote among various candidates. John Adams received thirty-four votes to thirty-five scattered among various other candidates, John Jay and John Hancock among others receiving votes.

At the second election, in 1792, Washington again received the votes of every elector, but for second choice there was a

division along party lines, John Adams receiving the vote of the Federalists, seventy-seven votes, and Governor George Clinton of New York fifty votes of the opposition.

In 1796, Washington having declined a third election, the two parties put forth their candidates—John Adams and Thomas Pinckney for the Federalists and Thomas Jefferson for the Democrats, Aaron Burr of New York, Samuel Adams of Massachusetts and others receiving Democratic votes for second place. Adams received seventy-one votes, Jefferson sixty-eight, two of Adams' votes being cast by electors who voted for both Adams and Jefferson.

In 1800 John Adams and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney were the Federalistic candidates, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr being the Democratic nominees. Jefferson and Burr each received seventy-three votes, and it thus became necessary for the House of Representatives to decide. Although it had been fully understood that Burr was to have the Vice-Presidency, he now made a vigorous effort to become President, and received the support of the Federalist members of the House for that position. The balloting being by States, eight voted for Jefferson and six for Burr, while two divided evenly. There was thus no majority, until on the thirty-sixth ballot several Federalist members failed to vote and Jefferson received the vote of eight States. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island voted for Burr. The latter, laying the loss of the Presidency to Hamilton, who advised his party that Jefferson was preferable, nursed his revenge; and when, later, Burr being a Federalist candidate for Governor of New York and Hamilton again opposed him, Burr, as is well known, challenged and killed Hamilton in a duel.

In 1804, when the Constitution had been amended so that votes were cast for President and Vice-President that the scandal of the last election might not be repeated, the Federalists nominated C. C. Pinckney and Rufus King, who received fourteen votes, to 162 for Jefferson and George Clinton.

In 1808 the Federalist candidates were the same, and Pinckney this time received forty-seven votes, against 142 for James Madison, the Democratic candidate. Clinton was again elected Vice-President, and died in office.

In 1812 Madison was renominated, with Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts for Vice-President. The Federalists nominated DeWitt Clinton of New York, a Democrat, with Jared Ingersoll for Vice-President. The vote was 128 to 89, in favor of Madison.

In 1816 the Democrats named James Monroe and Daniel D. Tompkins, while the Federalists put forward Rufus King for President, scattering their votes for the second place. King received twenty-four votes to 183 for Monroe. This was the last of the Federalist party. At this election their former President, John Adams, was at the head of the Democratic electoral ticket in Massachusetts.

In 1820 Monroe received all but one electoral vote, one elector breaking instructions and voting for John Quincy Adams, Monroe's Secretary of State, in order, as he explained, that Washington might remain the only President elected unanimously. Tompkins lacked fourteen votes of unanimous re-election.

In 1824 there were four candidates, all claiming to be the real sure-enough Democratic candidate—John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay and William H. Crawford. No candidate having a majority, the election was for the second time thrown into the House of Representatives, where Adams was chosen. John C. Calhoun was elected Vice-President by the Electoral College. This election caused much bad feeling and the dominant party split, the administration party calling themselves National Republicans and the opposition, headed by General Jackson, claiming the name Democrats.

In 1828 President Adams was defeated, receiving eighty-three votes to 128 for Jackson. Calhoun was re-elected Vice-President over Richard Rush.

In 1832 Jackson was re-elected, receiving 219 votes, against forty-nine for Henry Clay, while Martin Van Buren was

elected Vice-President over a scattered opposition.

In 1836 Van Buren was promoted to the Presidency, with Richard M. Johnson as running mate. The opposition adopted the ridiculous device of nominating no candidate, leaving the voters each to think that the electors of the Whig party, as it now called itself, would vote for his own particular candidate. The combination carried 124 votes to 170 for Van Buren. Johnson failed of a majority, but, according to the Constitution, was chosen by the Senate.

In 1840, a bank panic having occurred, Van Buren was defeated overwhelmingly by William Henry Harrison, who had been his leading opponent. The vote was 234 to 60. John Tyler was elected Vice-President, and, the President dying a month later, Tyler succeeded to the Presidency. He soon broke with his party and, before his term was out, went squarely over to the Democrats.

In 1844 James K. Polk was elected President and George M. Dallas Vice-President by the Democrats over Henry Clay and Theodore Frelinghuysen, Whigs. The vote was 170 to 105.

In 1848 the Democrats nominated General Lewis Cass for President and William O. Butler for Vice-President. General Zachary Taylor, a recent war hero, was the Whig candidate and was elected by a vote of 163 to 127. The Democratic defeat was brought about by the candidacy of ex-President Martin Van Buren as a candidate of a faction of the Democrats who were dissatisfied with the party's position on the slavery question. The President dying, the Vice-President, Millard Fillmore, became President a little more than a year later.

In 1852 General Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire and William R. King of Alabama were the Democratic candidates, General Winfield Scott of New Jersey and William A. Graham of North Carolina being the Whig candidates. Pierce and King were elected by a vote of 234 to 42, the Whigs carrying only Massachusetts, Connecticut, Kentucky and Tennessee. This finished the Whig party, its members going into the newly arisen Republican party, into the American or Know-nothing party or, in many cases, going over to the Democrats.

In 1856 James Buchanan was named by the Democrats with John C. Breckenridge as Vice-President. Opposed was the party which opposed the extension of slavery and which had taken the name Republican in order to attract the votes of Democrats who were attached to the older name of their party. The candidates were General John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton. Ex-President Fillmore as the candidate of the American party received the vote of Maryland—eight votes. Buchanan had 174, Fremont, 114.

In 1860 the extreme pro-slavery element of the Democratic party bolted the convention and nominated Vice-President Breckenridge for President, the regulars nominating Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. The "Constitutional Union Party," composed chiefly of old Whigs, named John Bell, who carried four Southern States. The Republican party named Abraham Lincoln, with Hannibal Hamlin for Vice-President. Although the divided Democratic factions cast a vote greatly in excess of that of the Republicans, the latter had 180 electoral votes to seventy-two for Breckenridge, thirty-nine for Bell and twelve for Douglas. The latter had a popular vote nearly equal to that of Bell and Breckenridge combined.

In 1864, at the height of the civil war, Lincoln was renominated, with Andrew Jackson, a Tennessee Democrat, for Vice-President. The Democrats named General George B. McClellan and George H. Pendleton. The electoral vote was 212 to 21 in favor of Lincoln.

The President having been assassinated by a crazy actor named Booth, Johnson succeeded. Attempting to carry out the known policy of Lincoln in reference to the readmission of the States, Johnson came into conflict with the leaders in Congress. In their determination to get rid of him, they attempted to do so by impeachment, but failed by one vote of the necessary two-thirds in the Senate.

In 1868 it became very probable that the

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